

United States Embassy Seoul, Republic of Korea

Security Message for U.S. Citizens:

Saturday Evening Demonstrations on Gwanghwamun Plaza

Date: November 23, 2016

U.S. Embassy Seoul informs U.S. citizens that various organizations under the umbrella name of the People's Action Group have announced plans to continue to stage large-scale rallies centered on Gwanghwamun Plaza (across from the U.S. Embassy) to include the area between Seoul City Hall and Gyeongbokgung Palace. Rallies have been scheduled for Saturday evenings, commencing at 6:00 p.m. and concluding at 9:00 p.m.; however, crowds are expected to gather before that time and demonstrations may continue past midnight. Korean authorities anticipate that participants supporting these rallies may number well over 100,000.

The People's Action Group has called for the next rally on November 26, 2016. The Republic of Korea (ROK) is a modern democracy with active public political participation, and political demonstrations are common. Demonstrations of all types occur regularly throughout Seoul and other Korean cities. However, the large size and location of the Saturday demonstrations on Gwanghwamun Plaza will result in congestion and road closings in the area.

There have been no reports of violence at the Saturday rallies to date. Even demonstrations intended to be peaceful can turn confrontational and escalate into violence, however. You should avoid areas of demonstrations, and exercise caution if in the vicinity of any large gatherings, protests, or demonstrations. Review your personal security plans, remain aware of your surroundings, including local events, and monitor local news stations for updates. Be vigilant and take appropriate steps to enhance your personal security.

We strongly recommend that U.S. citizens traveling or residing abroad enroll in the Department of State's [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#) at the [State](#)

[Department's website](#). STEP enrollment gives you the latest security updates and makes it easier for the U.S. embassy or nearest U.S. consulate to contact you in an emergency. If you don't have Internet access, enroll directly with the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.

Monitor the current Travel Warnings and Travel Alerts, and the Worldwide Caution on the [State Department's website](#). Read the [Country Specific Information for Republic of Korea](#). For additional information, refer to the ["Traveler's Checklist"](#).

Contact the U.S. embassy or consulate for up-to-date information on travel restrictions. You can also call 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the United States and Canada or 1-202-501-4444 from other countries. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays). Follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) to have travel information at your fingertips.

The U.S. Embassy in Seoul is located at 188 Sejong-daero, Jongno-gu and is open from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., telephone 02 397-4000. If you are a U.S. citizen in need of urgent assistance *outside of business hours*, **the emergency after-hours number for the U.S. Embassy/Consulate is 02 397-4114.**